

# ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC POLICIES FALL SHORT OF CLAIMS ACCORDING TO NEW REPORT

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(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, the Bush Administration and Washington Republicans continue to tout the success of their economic policies. But their economic record actually falls far short of their rhetoric.

This week, the Democratic staffs of the House Budget Committee and the Joint Economic Committee released a report showing that employment growth is at its lowest levels since the Eisenhower administration, while inflation-adjusted wages have decreased by 1.3 percent since August of 2003, when the economy stopped losing jobs.

Today, the average American worker is spending more hours on the job for less pay. According to the report, median annual household income has decreased by \$1,700 after accounting for inflation since President Bush took office back in 2001.

While the wealthiest have been rewarded with tax breaks, middle-class workers are really feeling the pinch. Stagnant wages are making it difficult for them to pay for rising housing, health care and gas bills.

## SECURITY FIRST

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I spent time traveling through my district and talking with people from all across the political spectrum. And I consistently heard quotes like this: "Let's secure the border. Let's have security first. Let's stop illegal entry into this country."

Mr. Speaker, I want all of these folks to know that we hear them. We hear them loud and clear. And this House majority is fighting those who would grant amnesty to individuals who have broken our laws.

Our majority leader, Mr. BOEHNER, has written an op-ed today in the Philadelphia Enquirer. I want to thank him for that.

He is absolutely right when he says, and I quote, "Congress has compromised on this issue too long."

We are standing firm for a security first bill, Mr. Speaker.

I look forward to the field hearings that we are going to have across this country in August. The hearings will show those opposed to a security first bill that the American people are on our side in this issue.

# BUSH ADMINISTRATION STATUS QUO IS NO LONGER SUSTAINABLE IN IRAQ

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, when President Bush meets with Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki at the White House today, he needs to tell the Iraqi leader that the time has come for his government to shoulder more responsibility.

Congressional Democrats have said this year that we need to have a significant year of transition from U.S. to Iraqi forces. That is not happening. In fact, the violence there is getting worse. Over the last month alone, the number of Iraqis who have been killed has doubled from 1,500 in May to more than 3,000 in June. Imagine that. One hundred Iraqis are now being killed every day. The sectarian violence between the Sunnis and the Shiites is clearly getting worse, and the Iraqi Government simply cannot stop it.

For 3 years now, House Democrats have been demanding a serious debate on Iraq. Instead, last month House Republicans favored a partisan debate in the hopes that they would score political points.

Today Iraq is close to fighting a civil war, and we must see that this does not happen.

## HEZBOLLAH'S ATTACK ON ISRAEL

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, those who equate Israel's recent actions with the same barbarism as those of Hezbollah are sorely misinformed. Hezbollah is a self-proclaimed terrorist organization whose motives are to destroy the very principles of freedom and democracy that Israel, not to mention the United States, promotes in the Middle East. Israel is the only democracy in the region, and the survival of Israel needs to be guaranteed.

It is regrettable that the fighting has escalated to the level it has, but Israel has the right to defend itself. Israel has been bombarded continuously by hundreds of katyusha rockets on a daily basis for too long.

There is going to have to be European and international involvement and support to ensure that Hezbollah cannot reentrench itself in southern Lebanon next to the border of Israel, and it is time for Syria and Iran to act as responsible states and not as perpetrators and subsidizers of terrorism.

Of course, we all want peace in the Middle East, but let us not forget who started this and their motives.

I wish Secretary Rice the best in helping to bring a lasting peace to a highly intractable situation.

## IT IS TIME FOR A NEW DIRECTION

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. The Republican doing nothing-of-substance Congress is unwilling to tackle issues of importance to the American people because they might upset their wealthy special interest campaign contributors in an election year. There is so much they could do and so little being done.

We could take care of the 7 million seniors who are about to fall in the doughnut hole of the so-called Medicare prescription drug benefit, getting no coverage, having to pay 2,600 bucks out of pocket. But that would upset the pharmaceutical industry.

We could increase the Federal minimum wage for the first time in 7 years. But tax cuts for millionaires take precedence.

And this week as every oil company announces record-breaking profits exceeding last year's record-breaking profits, what action is being taken to rein in the price gouging? None, because that would offend Big Oil.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot the United States Congress can do. The problem is the Republican-run Congress is tied down by special interests.

It is time we take America in a new direction.

## COMMENDING REACH OUT AND READ

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this August during an annual district bus tour, I will have the opportunity to read aloud to children participating in the Reach Out and Read program.

Reach Out and Read is a nonprofit organization that partners with medical institutions to promote a partnership between early childhood literacy and pediatric care. The organization trains doctors and nurses in the importance of early literacy. During check-ups, each child age 6 months to 5 years is given a new book, and parents are encouraged to read aloud to them. As of June 2006, there were nearly 3,000 Reach Out and Read programs nationwide, benefiting 2.5 million children annually.

As a member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, ably led by Chairman BUCK McKEON, I am all too aware of the school readiness issues facing our Nation. Organizations such as Reach Out and Read are to be commended for their efforts to prepare better our Nation's children for success at school and in life.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.